

# Annual Report for 1895.

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*To the Rural District Council of East Kerrier.*

GENTLEMEN,

During the past year of 1895, 229 births have been registered, 126 males and 103 females, giving an annual birth-rate of 26.9 per thousand inhabitants.

During the same period 155 deaths have been registered, 77 males and 78 females, giving an annual death-rate of 18.21 per thousand inhabitants.

I again append a list of the birth-rates and death-rates for the past ten years, as it will be interesting for comparison ; but it must be remembered that the rates for the years 1886 to 1892, inclusive, are calculated on a population of 9527 (before the amalgamation of Penwerris with Falmouth), whilst those for 1893, 1894, and 1895 are calculated on a population of 8510—

“ Birth-rates for past ten years.”

1895—26.9
1894—24.3
1893—23.8
1892—24.6
1891—26.3
1890—27.5
1889—25.1
1888—?
1887—27.2
1886—24

“ Death-rates for past ten years.”

1895—18.21
1894—20.68
1893—19.62
1892—14.17
1891—20.9
1890—20.7
1889—16.2
1888—14.4
1887—15.8
1886—21.6

The natural increase for 1895 was 74 ; for 1894, 31 ; and for 1893, 36.

On reference to Table A, herewith enclosed, it will be seen that of the total number of deaths in 1895, fifty-eight had attained the age of sixty-five and upwards ; more than one-third of the total. Nineteen of these had reached the age of eighty years and upwards, one being over ninety. Twenty-five deaths of children under one year of age occurred, and eight deaths of children between one and five years of age. Of deaths from Zymotic diseases, one death resulted from Diphtheria, two from Whooping Cough, and four from Diarrhoea. Respiratory diseases caused forty-five deaths, eleven died from Heart disease, one from Anthrax, and five from injuries. Cancer caused eight deaths. Of the twenty-five deaths among infants under one year of age, twelve were certified as dying from Marasmus, Diarrhoea, and Abdominal Phthisis, five from Bronchitis, three from Convulsions, two were prematurely born, one died from Rickets, and one from Whooping Cough.

I am glad to say that 1895 compares favourably with 1894 in the amount of sickness due to Zymotic diseases. In 1894 there were forty-four cases of Typhoid

Fever, twenty-one cases of Scarlatina, and three cases of Diphtheria; whereas in 1895 there have been seven cases of Typhoid Fever, eight cases of Scarlatina, and one case of Diphtheria, and out of these there was only one death, that being the Diphtheria case. Of course the most striking difference between the two years is in the number of cases of Typhoid Fever, the large number of cases of that disease in 1894 being almost entirely due to the serious epidemic which raged in Budock during the latter part of that year. I hope and believe we shall never have such an epidemic as that again. Of the seven cases of Typhoid Fever three occurred in Constantine Church Town, two in College, Budock, and two in Flushing. The Constantine cases were all in one house. This house is situated in a small yard with four other houses; for the five houses there were two closets, attached to which was a very large and wet cess-pit, which, at the time of the appearance of the disease, was full to overflowing and very offensive. This pit was situated close to the back of the house in which the Fever cases were, and there is but little doubt that this insanitary condition of things was the cause of the Fever in this instance.

With regard to the two cases at College, Budock, the first case occurred in the latter part of October. At the time I attributed this case to a choked drain, the defective trap of which was situated just under the kitchen window; the smell from this drain was said to be very bad at times. But I have since found out that the drinking water for this house, as well as for all the houses in that locality, six to eight in all, was derived from a Well, situated in a neighbour's garden close by; and it is the water from this well to which I give the credit, not only for the appearance of the disease in this case, but also in the second case, which arose in the early part of December, or latter part of November. To call the source from which this water was derived "a well" is a misnomer; it is barely more than an open ditch, filled with water derived from the surrounding country. On one side of this well the country is at a higher level than the well, and on this side and not far from the well are a privy and cess-pit of the most primitive type, a pig-sty, and a drain, which comes from the house in which the first case of Fever was, and which discharges on to the surface of the garden near to the pig-sty. It is not difficult to see that the water from such a source could not escape pollution. It is a marvellous thing that such a supply should have been used so long with impunity. The condition of the house, in which the second case of Fever was, left much to be desired, as did that of the next house, whilst the privy accommodation for both, as well as that for the whole of the houses there, was defective and dilapidated in the extreme, and the pits offensive to all that pass by, abutting as they do on the public highway. Not one of all these houses was drained, although a main drain, laid specially to drain these properties some time ago, passes in front of the houses from the gasworks to the Budock River sewer.

The two Flushing cases occurred in the same house, the second following upon the first in quick succession. The house and yard were very clean, and I had nothing to complain of in these, but in the yard is a pit, which is probably the finest pit in Flushing, and when I say that some idea of its size can be formed. This venerable pit has been an object of contemplation, and a subject for reports for years past, but whatever one says against it, nothing seems to affect it, and the pit goes on for ever. I was told that the smells at times from this pit pervade the house and the yard.

Of the eight cases of Scarlatina, three occurred in Ponsanooth, one in July, one in August, and one in September, all in separate houses. The remaining five were in

the parish of Perran-ar-worthal, one in August, one in November, and three in December; the last three cases were in one family, and the other two in separate houses. It is fortunate that this complaint did not in either case become epidemic, especially as in other districts it was very prevalent in 1895. I really think that in most of the instances the people paid every attention to the instructions given, and took every precaution in their power; to this I attribute, to a great extent, the small number of cases of this disease.

The case of Diphtheria was at Flushing, and ended fatally. I could not see anything on the premises themselves to account for the appearance of this disease, nor could I in the case of Membranous Croup, which also occurred at Flushing. Both cases arose within a short time of each other.

The remaining cases of Notifiable Diseases which occurred were three cases of Erysipelas, one in January, and the other two in September. There is nothing special to mention in connection with these.

The case of Anthrax occurred in the parish of Mylor, and ended fatally. I could get no clue as to how this case arose. The young man was a cattle man, but there had never been a case of Anthrax on the place at which he worked.

Of Non-notifiable Epidemic Diseases, we have had during 1895 visitations from Influenza, Whooping Cough, and Summer Diarrhoea.

Influenza first made its appearance in the early part of March. The weather all through February had been intensely cold, everything ice-bound, but the first three weeks of March were fine and spring-like; it was then, when the intense cold gave place suddenly to much warmer weather, that Influenza appeared. A very large number of cases occurred, and continued to do so through March, April, and into May, when the epidemic began to subside. At no time was the type of the disease of a serious nature, although the wild, wet, and cold weather which came on about the 23rd of March caused many cases to assume serious proportions.

Whooping Cough commenced in May, and rapidly became epidemic, though certain portions of the District suffered more than others; it continued through June and July, died away in August to re-appear in full force, chiefly in Perran-ar-worthal, in September. There were two deaths from this complaint.

Summer Diarrhoea commenced at the latter part of August, but throughout September it became very prevalent. No doubt a great many of the cases was due to the indiscreet eating of fruit, whilst the atmospheric conditions which prevailed throughout September were calculated to make matters worse; intense and oppressive heat, with heavy fogs and mists, especially in the early part of the month. The place which suffered most from this complaint was Budock (Penryn end of Parish); here the cases were more numerous and virulent. In this low-lying locality the intense heat and the heavy fogs and mists were at their greatest, and unfortunately at that time the sanitary condition of the Budock River was such that I expected something far worse than Choleraic Diarrhoea. The River was as bad as it ever was at any time, and that is saying a good deal, and the smells arising from it were offensive beyond description. I consider that the dreadful condition of this River at that time accounted for many cases, not only in Budock, but also in the Borough of Penryn, which appeared in houses well removed from the immediate neighbourhood of the River, but unfortunately connected with it by means of drains discharging into it. Up these drains, twice in every twenty-four

hours, poisonous gases from the decomposing filth in the bed of the river were driven by the rise of the tide. That side of the Borough of Penryn, which was connected by its drains with this river, was almost the only portion of the Borough which suffered from this complaint. I am very glad to say that since then a great change has come over the condition of the Budock River, and I think and hope that it will never again be the trouble and anxiety it has hitherto been.

Throughout the year steady and systematic inspection of the whole district has been carried out and a great deal of sanitary work has been done, but prominent among the things done I may mention :—

**I.—DRAINAGE.** The chief work accomplished in this respect is the completion of the Budock River Drainage Scheme. I am glad to say that all the work, which was decided upon and agreed to by this Authority and the Penryn Urban Authority, has been accomplished. A large 12-inch main, extending from College and discharging well down the river beyond all houses, was laid in 1894, but it was not until the latter part of 1895 that all connections on both the Penryn and Budock sides were completed, and now, instead of drains, privies, &c., discharging directly into the river, and causing the bed of the river to rapidly fill up and to become nothing more than an elongated cess-pool of the vilest description, they discharge into the main sewer, the contents of which are discharged well away from all houses down the river. The improvement thus effected can scarcely be estimated and can certainly not be appreciated, except by those who have an intimate knowledge of what this river used to be and of all the diseases and deaths it has been the cause. Something however, in my opinion, still remains to be done. People, I find, will throw ashes and other refuse into the river, even though proper arrangements exist for the systematic removal of such matters ; and when in the summer months the stream of water running down the river is so small that it has no power to wash such matters on, these will accumulate and create a nuisance. I therefore again advise that a good and well-fitting sluice gate be built at a point above where the drain commences. By this means the water, which is constantly running down the river in greater or less quantity according to the season of the year, could be dammed back and made to accumulate in such a quantity that, when the gate is opened, there would be such a rush of water that everything that may have been thrown into the river would be carried in front of it. Such a gate could be easily placed there and the expense would not be great. At the same time some provision could be made for the flushing of the main itself by the same rush of water. If this recommendation is carried out, I think there would be little left to complain of with regard to this river.

Other useful and necessary drainage work has been carried out at Passage Hill, Mylor, at Flushing, at College, Budock, &c.

**II.—WATER SUPPLY.** Under this heading a large amount of good work has been accomplished. At Flushing the supply from the source to the Reservoir, which was greatly diminished owing to leakage from the joints of the earthenware pipes and the blocking of the pipes by roots growing into them, has been much increased in quantity, and improved in quality, by the substitution of iron pipes for earthenware pipes, and these now extend from the Kersey all the way to the Reservoir.

In May, Budock Pump was re-opened, after everything that could be done was done to protect this supply from pollution in the future. To re-open this pump was, in my opinion, a wrong thing to do, and for the following reasons :—

1.—“The situation of the Pump is bad.” It is situated in a low-lying locality, with houses, closets, drains, &c., all in close proximity to it, and all at a higher level than the pump. Something might at any time go wrong with such surroundings, and pollution of the water take place before we can possibly be aware of it. For instance, the heavy traffic over the road in front of the pump might crack even the cast iron pipes which have replaced the old earthenware pipes, which, when exposed, were themselves found to be broken into bits, allowing sewage freely to enter the well.

2.—“The water itself is not of first-class quality.” We have had three analyses of this water made at different times by independent analysts, and it has never been spoken well of. The last analysis was made in May, 1895, when the pump was re-opened, and after everything had been done to protect it from pollution, and after it had been thoroughly cleaned out; so that the sample was taken when the water in it was at its very best. There had been continued dry weather for some time. The analyst said of this sample, “I cannot regard this as a first-class drinking water, but after filtration I consider that it might be safely used for all domestic purposes.”

3.—“The Pump itself is no longer the necessity it once was.” At one time it was the sole supply for this locality, but the Sanitary Authority has compelled all owners of property to connect with the mains of the Falmouth Waterworks Company, where possible; and now every house in Budock, with the exception of four or five high up in Hill Head, is connected with the Company’s mains. So that now practically the whole of Budock is independent of the Pump. I have never recommended the absolute doing away with the Pump. I have only said “do not use it unless compelled to; keep the handle off until water from all other sources fail when, if the Pump, too, be not dry, we could still fall back upon it.”

However, the Pump is now at work, and I sincerely hope all will go well with it. Of one thing I am certain, that now people have water in their houses the Pump is not made use of to anything like the extent it once was. I have entered rather fully into my reasons for protesting against the re-opening of the Pump for the reason that, if in future years something goes wrong with it and its surroundings, it shall not be said that it was for lack of sufficient warning on my part.

In the village of Budock Water a much-needed want has been supplied. Up to within a month or two ago the inhabitants have had to go a long distance to a well in a field, but now in the centre of the village a well has been sunk, a pump fixed, and a good supply obtained. This is a great boon.

(I may here mention that at the last meeting of the District Council it was decided to carry the Falmouth Waterworks Company’s water to all those houses in College, Budock, where were the cases of Typhoid Fever mentioned by me earlier in this Report, and also to connect each house with the main drain, which some time previously had been laid for the express purpose of draining these houses.)

At Bareppa and Carlidnick in Mawnan, at Churchtown, Gweek, and Sevorgan in Constantine, at Ponsanooth, at Perranwell, Chyvogue and Terrandean in Perran, at

Tregew, Six-turnings, Passage Hill, and Comford, in Mylor, important, and in some cases very important, improvements in pre-existing supplies have been effected. I think I have mentioned sufficient to show that the question of water-supply has not been neglected, and I doubt if there are many districts better supplied than this.

**III.—EXCREMENT DISPOSAL.** The locality which shows the most marked improvement under this heading is Budock (Penryn end of parish.) The changes effected during the past year or two have been very great. At one time, and not long ago, the Budock pits almost out-rivalled all other pits in the district, but now, where many of the worst once existed, one finds nice clean pan-closets and no pit, the ashes and other refuse being kept in receptacles, which are systematically emptied by a man duly appointed. Each closet is connected with drains, which instead of emptying direct into the Budock River as of old, now discharge into the sewer in the bed of the river. Ventilating shafts have been fixed at various points in Budock to the main drains. Of course, what has been done under this heading in Budock has been rendered possible on account of the proximity of the Falmouth Waterworks Company's mains; without an abundant water-supply it is impossible to work pan-closets. For this reason, at present, at any rate, I cannot see how in Flushing the water closet system can be adopted generally. That such a system would be of inestimable advantage to this important and attractive village, cannot be doubted, for as long as the pits remain as they are, so every year shall I have to report cases of Typhoid Fever, Diphtheria, and other diseases caused by filth. If the emptying of the pits be left to the people themselves, I know they will not be emptied until they are full and often overflowing. They say it is a pity to empty them too soon and before sufficient has been accumulated to make it "worth their while" to have them emptied. Some are not emptied once in six months, and when the day comes for "carrying" such a pit, one can imagine what an intolerable nuisance it must be to every house within fifty yards or more. Something must really be done to cope with this state of things. A large number of the pits are in a most dilapidated condition, allowing soakage of their liquid contents into the surrounding country, and so saturating the soil in and around dwellings; the majority are altogether too large, and for all there is no systematic emptying. The system of excrement disposal prevalent in Flushing is bad, but I am sure that a great deal might be done to minimize the evil.

In all other parts of the District the midden system prevails, and I do not see that anything better could be adopted. In all places where new privies and pits are built they have to be built to the satisfaction of the Sanitary Inspector and myself. In Constantine Churchtown an attempt was at one time made to empty the pits in the village systematically, but I believe this arrangement has broken down. Although in the case of Constantine the need for a systematic emptying of pits is not so pressing as at Flushing, yet, considering the importance of the village and the relations in which a great many of the pits stand towards dwelling houses, it is far more necessary that steps should be taken in this matter in Constantine than in any other of the remaining villages included in the District.

**IV.—SCAVENGING.** The District Council has entered into arrangements with certain private individuals for the systematic scavenging of several of the more important villages, and I believe that such arrangements work satisfactorily.

I am again asked by the Local Government Board whether we have a hospital for the isolation of cases of Infectious Diseases, and of course my reply is that we have no such Hospital. I have more than once expressed my ideas on this matter, so I will not go very fully into it. My advice is that this District Council should consult one or more Councils in our immediate neighbourhood, and see if some house could not be found, or erected, which would be common to each of the combining districts for the isolation of such cases of Infectious Diseases, as could not possibly be properly isolated in their own homes. It is not always, as in the account of the eight cases of Scarlatina given earlier in this report, that one can come across people who intelligently carry out the instructions given to them. Sometimes people will not do what they are told; such people either think that it is a good thing for children to get through all such ailments as Measles, Scarlatina, etc., whilst they are young, or that if their little ones are fated to have such diseases, they will have them in spite of everything and everybody, or some such similar nonsense. It therefore might become at any moment, when one has such people to deal with, a serious thing for ratepayers generally in these days of notification, when each case notified means a half-a-crown fee.

There is one other matter to which I must refer before closing this report and that is the question of Vaccination. I know that the majority of this District Council opposes enforcing the powers conferred upon the Council by the Vaccination Act. The result is that whilst 229 children were born in this district in 1895 there were only 24 vaccinations, and that in the Borough of Penryn, which is a part of the Falmouth Union, there were 82 births and only one vaccination. It will therefore be seen that, with us at any rate, this Act is a dead letter. I fear it is useless for me to again give my reasons why I think this Act should be enforced, for I have already in previous years done so over and over again. The only thing that would now convert the majority against enforcing the Act to my way of thinking would be the appearance of a few cases of Small Pox in our midst. I think that such a calamity would very quickly make us all practically unanimous on this vexed question.

I have now come to the end of my Report on 1895, and I have tried to give a fair account of all that happened during that year in the shape of disease and death, pointing out the causes for such, where I could, and the lessons which they teach us, according to the circumstances under which they occurred. I have also given a resumé of the sanitary work accomplished during the year, and throughout I have tried to point out the weak spots in our armour, and how to mend them. No one can say but that a very large amount of most useful sanitary work has been accomplished, but a good deal remains to be done, and I hope that 1896 will do for some places what 1895 has done for others.

I have the honour, Gentlemen, to remain,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES BLAMEY, M.O.H.

January 29th, 1896.

